

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 49-55 without prejudice and amend the claims as follows:

1-43. (Canceled)

44. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising:

a first ribonucleotide (RNA) sequence wherein said first RNA sequence is greater than [[20-100]] 20 and up to 100 nucleotides in length, and wherein said first RNA sequence is identical to a sequence complementary to a region of a target gene, and

a second RNA sequence wherein said second RNA sequence is complementary to said first RNA sequence,

wherein said nucleic acid molecule is capable of post-transcriptionally repressing, delaying or otherwise reducing expression of the target gene in a mammalian cell when the nucleic acid molecule is introduced into said mammalian cell wherein the expression of the target gene is reduced by sequence-specific degradation of a RNA transcript of the target gene by an endogenous system of the mammalian cell, and wherein the first RNA sequence and the second RNA sequence are transcription products of a construct comprising a transcription terminator sequence that is operable in the mammalian cell.

45-46. (Canceled)

47. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule according to claim 44, wherein said first and second RNA sequences consist essentially of ribonucleotides.

48. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule according to claim 44, wherein at least one of said first and second RNA sequences is comprised at least partially of ribonucleotide analogues.

49-55. (Canceled)

56. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule according to any one of claims 44, 47 and 48, wherein said first RNA sequence is about the same length as said second RNA sequence.

57. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule according to any one of claims 44, 47 and 48, wherein said first RNA sequence is the same length as the second RNA sequence.

58. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule according to claim 44, wherein the first and second RNA sequences are in the same nucleic acid strand.

59. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule of claim 58, wherein the first and second RNA sequences are separated by a nucleic acid stuffer sequence.

60. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule according to claim 44, wherein the first and second RNA sequences are in separate nucleic acid strands.

61. (Previously Presented) The nucleic acid molecule according to claim 44, wherein the first RNA sequence is identical to said sequence complementary to said region of said target gene and exactly complementary to said second RNA sequence.

62-76. (Canceled)